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Towards the Development of a Murabbi

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to provide a critical analysis of the curriculum of Islamic education. The question to be addressed in this chapter is whether the current curriculum of Islamic education is able to realise the true purpose of Islamic education. In seeking the answer to this question, the chapter focuses on various views of curriculum and the different concepts of education they incorporate. To this end, the first section provides a conceptual framework for critically examining the curriculum, which draws on Habermas' Theory of Knowledge-Constitutive Interests (KCI), and in particular, the way this is employed by Grundy (1987) to examine different kinds of curriculum policy, practice, and pedagogy. In the second section, the curriculum of Islamic education is analysed so as to identify its curriculum and the view of education it sustains. The next section suggests Kazmi's (2003) personalised knowledge as an alternative view of Islamic education and how this view is able to realise the true purpose of Islamic education.

A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE ANALYSIS OF CURRICULUM AND PEDAGOGY: IDEALS, REALITIES, AND IDEOLOGIES

Defining the 'Curriculum'

The way curriculum is understood and theorised has changed over the years, which has inevitably led to considerable disputation regarding its meaning. A general definition of curriculum is succinctly described by Kerr as 'all the learning which is planned and guided by the school, whether carried on in groups or individually, inside or outside the school' (cited in Kelly, 1999, p. 6). This definition treats curriculum as a programme of activities which teachers may not be involved in planning, but are responsible for what students learn. It also includes the formal and informal curriculum where the former concerns learning activities that take

place during the school timetable whilst the latter involves activities that go on outside of school hours such as extracurricular activities.

However, this definition does not capture the 'unintended' learning that students acquire through the 'hidden curriculum.' The 'hidden curriculum' implies that sometimes students learn things which are not intended by teachers. In a sense, what is taught may not necessarily match what students learn. There is a distinction between the 'planned' and the 'received' curriculum. Any of these definitions of curriculum should consider more than just the content of what is to be taught. More importantly, the developers of a curriculum need to consider the purpose and effects of such knowledge on its recipients. The relationship between intention and reality of curriculum should be examined if curriculum theory and practice are to be linked.

It would be clearer and more meaningful if curriculum was defined and understood in relation to society. This could be achieved with the help of Habermas' Theory of Knowledge-Constitutive Interests (KCI) of how fundamental human interests influence how knowledge is 'constituted' or constructed, which is presented in the following section.

Theory of Knowledge-Constitutive Interests

Habermas theorises that there are three types of knowledge which are bound by certain human interests. These three 'knowledge-constitutive interests' (KCI) correspond to particular forms of sciences. The 'empirical and analytic sciences' promote the technical interest in predicting and controlling the natural world. However, when individuals interact with each other this promotes an interest in understanding and interpreting meanings, which gives rise to the 'historical and hermeneutics sciences.' Finally, the third KCI derives from human beings' concern to achieve rational autonomy of action, free from any form of domination whether the domination of nature over human life, or of some groups over others. This concern for emancipation from domination is the interest served by the 'emancipatory science' of critical theory. Habermas' theory of KCI is illustrated in Table 1.

Habermas' 'emancipatory science' or critical social science aims to realise the individuals' ability of self-reflection and critical thought. It does so by engaging in his concept of 'discourse.' Here I intend to show how Habermas' three KCI give rise to three different views of education, each of which leads to a different definition of curriculum. 'Habermas' knowledge-constitutive interests shape what human beings consider as knowledge and determine the categories by which human beings organise that knowledge' (Grundy, 1987, p. 10). As illustrated in the table, Habermas' three basic interests, which are, the 'technical', 'practical' and 'emancipatory' or 'critical' interests constitute the three types of knowledge generated and organised in society: the empirical-analytic, historical-hermeneutic, and critical sciences.

Table 1 Habermas' Theory of Knowledge-Constitutive Interests

Type of Human Interest	Kind of Knowledge	Research Methods
Technical (prediction)	Instrumental (causal explanation)	Positivistic Sciences (empirical-analytic methods)
Practical (interpretation and understanding)	Practical (understanding)	Interpretive Research (historical and hermeneutics methods)
Emancipatory (criticism and liberation)	Emancipation (critical reflection)	Critical Social Sciences (critical theory, emancipatory action research)

(*Source*: Adapted from MacIsaac, 1996 and Carr, 1985, p. 94)

Grundy's matching Habermas' theory of KCI with Aristotle's dispositions of *techne*, *phronesis*, and *praxis* will be helpful in understanding different views of curriculum. Aristotle views these dispositions as forms of reasoning that inform different types of action. Grundy argues that these dispositions also correspond to different forms of knowledge which then give rise to three different forms of curriculum: 'technical', 'practical', and 'critical.' These three curricula differ in terms of the forms of knowledge, aims of education, what education, schooling, knowledge and curriculum mean, theory and practice relationship, teaching and learning, the teacher's role, the teacher-student relationship, and evaluation.

Curriculum as 'Technical'

Aristotle identified the disposition of *techne* or skill with the action of the artisan (craftsperson). An artisan engages in 'making' or 'creating' something where this form of action depends upon the exercising of his/her skills (*techne*) and is based on the idea or pattern that the artisan intends to make. Thus the artisan's skilled actions are restricted by the 'idea' of what is to be created. This 'idea' or image is referred to as *eidos* by Grundy (1987); or, in the educational context, it can also be considered the plan or programme consisting of some long term objectives. Meanwhile, the outcome of the artisan's skilled actions of making or creating is known as the *product*. If this technical reasoning became the basis of education, curriculum would then mean planned activities or experiences consisting of a certain set of goals and objectives which teachers use their skills to produce. For example, a student is considered 'literate' when s/he is able to produce a well written essay. In this particular example, the essay is considered a material product or the evaluated outcome where, based on this outcome, teachers can determine whether the student is literate. In a sense, the lesson plan and the learning objectives can be considered

the *eidos* that determine students' learning. Education then becomes instrumental and technical, while the teaching-learning process becomes instructional and procedural because teachers 'follow known rules, use given materials and means to achieve the already determined ends' (Carr, 1995, p. 11).

When importance is placed on the outcome or material product of education, curriculum is seen as the means of achieving a product. But although curriculum becomes a 'product,' it is not a productive view of the curriculum, rather it is a reproductive view of the curriculum because curriculum as product suggests that 'the purpose of a teacher's work is to reproduce in the students the various ideas, goals or objectives that guide the work' (Grundy, 1987, p. 25). A reproductive view of the curriculum involves the objectification of reality when it regards the environment (including the learners) as an object, and 'as objects their behaviour and learning are managed by the teachers' (ibid, p. 30). In another sense, besides the manipulation of the environment, the 'technical' interest also implies that people who formulate educational objectives are in power because it is the idea that determines the end. Although teachers may be in control of the environment, they do so because they are compelled to make sure that the desired learning occurs. Hence teachers become mere implementers rather than important decision makers.

The curriculum issues implied by this 'technical' curriculum include: What are the specific objectives that the curriculum has been designed to achieve? What kind of content can best achieve these objectives? How will these objectives be evaluated? How would teachers manage their classes? What are the teaching skills that teachers need to have in order to be effective in achieving these objectives? And what exactly is the teacher's role? As the reproductive curriculum is more concerned with transmitting the traditions of a society so that established social structures are maintained, this is made achievable through three essential constituents: the ideas that are translated into specific objectives; the process (teaching and learning process where teachers' skills and effectiveness, and teaching aids or given materials become useful); and the outcome or product (measured against the fulfilment of the specified objectives). In this view of curriculum and education, educational theory is divorced from its practice in the sense that there exists a gap between the two. Apple (1990) labelled this view of education and curriculum as a mechanical function of schooling because, when schooling strictly becomes a site for social reproduction, it does not allow space for social improvement and change.

Curriculum as 'Practical'

The second view of education perceives curriculum as 'practice' and emerges from Habermas' second fundamental human interest, namely 'practical' interest. Drawing upon Aristotle's second disposition, that is, *phronesis*, translated as 'practical

judgment', it is a disposition towards morally responsible or 'good' action rather than 'correct' or instrumentally effective actions (Grundy, 1987). The tendency of 'practical' reasoning to do good, rather than correct actions distinguishes *phronesis* from techne as the former deals with 'doing' actions while the latter with 'making' actions regardless of their values. Furthermore, the 'practical' interest involves 'action between subjects, not action upon objects.' To exercise practical judgment one has to deliberate, which incorporates processes of interpretation, meaning-making, and reflection of a situation so that appropriate action can be decided upon and taken. When a 'practical' interest is informing curriculum practices, the emphasis is placed on practice rather than the outcome or product.

A curriculum based on the 'practical' interest would not be a syllabus to be implemented but be a proposal that could influence teachers' judgments of what action they ought (morally) to take in particular educational situations. More importantly, it is an act of meaning-making in the sense that it involves teachers' interpretations of curriculum policies and proposals. In doing so, teachers create their own meanings as they make moral judgments about what they ought to do when dealing with their students as learning subjects rather than objects. Meaning-making also becomes a form of learning for the students and teachers as they interact with each other in their attempt to understand. Learning and not teaching becomes the central focus of teachers because the 'idea' takes a different position in curriculum as practice. In this 'practical' view of education, the product no longer becomes the focus of education as students are not objectified. The 'idea' becomes more general and implied in the 'notion of the 'good' that depends upon teachers' judgment as to how the idea is interpreted and translated into action.' (Grundy, 1987, p. 74) In this 'practical' view of curriculum, teachers are not mere implementers of a planned programme but act as decision makers themselves when they exercise their own practical judgment in their students' learning. In this view of curriculum as practice, curriculum is perceived as an 'idea' that is determined by the considerations of the 'good.' The relationship of theory and practice is dialectical as both inform each other and are guided by values and criteria that concern the 'good' rather than the 'correct.' The product or outcome is not the focus in this particular view but the 'good' action or practice is.

Similarly, pedagogy, would involve making judgments that would further the 'good' of all participants. Stenhouse advocates that curriculum itself is 'a particular form of specification about the practice of teaching and not as a package of materials or a syllabus of ground to be covered.' (Grundy, 1987, p. 71). If this is the case for curriculum as practice then each school would be responsible and accountable for the development and evaluation of their own educational policies and practices. There would be neither a centralised curriculum nor a centralised examination system because the power resides with the schools and not the policymakers. In fact, the teachers' role would also involve all aspects of curriculum development. When a 'practical' interest influences curriculum practices, they may

be facilitated by the teachers' pedagogical skills, but they depend more on the teachers exercising their judgement. Thus it is essential to understand the distinction between judgment and skill. Judgment is not a skill because it is not developed through technical training but through processes of reflection. So two teachers may teach the same subject and they may face a similar practical problem but how they proceed to solve the problem would be different because each would depend on their practical judgment and not their technical skills in overcoming the problem. This is the value of the 'practical' interest and curriculum as practice which is absent in the 'technical' interest and curriculum as product.

Curriculum as 'Critical'

Habermas' third interest, which is the emancipatory interest, when matched with Aristotle's disposition of *praxis* (morally informed and committed action) gives rise to the view of curriculum as *praxis*. This interest is also compatible with the 'practical' interest and, according to Grundy (1987), the emancipatory interest is the development of the 'practical' interest although is neither a necessary nor a natural development. Curriculum as *praxis* accepts the claim that knowledge is socially constructed and therefore not only involves critical interpretation, reflection and practical judgment, but also actively involves the construction and reconstruction of meanings. *Praxis* is a dynamic interaction of action and reflection and its relationship to the emancipatory interest is made clear in its emphasis on questioning the interest that is being served by certain kinds of knowledge. It is by critically questioning the social and ideological purpose of knowledge that praxis enlightens what is problematic within that socially constructed knowledge. By doing so, curriculum as *praxis* makes participants aware of the origins of that knowledge, and enlightens them as to how that knowledge has become embedded in the dominant ideology and thereby functions to suppress participants' right to construct and reconstruct their own meanings. The relationship between theory and practice in this view of curriculum and education is dialectical and dynamic where theory and practice transform each other through critical reflection.

The guiding 'idea' of the emancipatory interest is neither as specific as the 'technical' interest nor as general as the idea of 'good' of the 'practical' interest. The 'idea' of the emancipatory interest falls in between both ideas, which is the 'idea' of 'emancipation' as a specific educational good (Grundy, 1987). Curriculum *praxis* that is informed by an emancipatory interest will constantly ask the question of whether curriculum practice emancipates participants from the dictates of ideology through the process of learning. The selection of curriculum content is based on a 'negotiated' curriculum that promotes critical consciousness. Negotiation of the curriculum means that teacher and student together negotiate its content. The selection of curriculum content goes through critical investigation as what is

being counted as curriculum knowledge itself becomes a legitimate part of curriculum content. The content of curriculum as *praxis* allows students to be involved in the knowledge construction process. Knowledge is not learned in the cognitive sense alone, but it also involves the beliefs of the participants to the extent that it is students who will determine whether to change or refuse to change. In this sense there is no coercion in learning and teachers do not have any control of the students, which explicitly contradicts the curriculum based on the 'technical' interest.

Just like curriculum content, pedagogy is also perceived differently by curriculum as *praxis*. Pedagogy that is informed by an emancipatory interest becomes part of the rigorous meaning-making activity of a group of participants who are able to participate in a critical discourse through undistorted communication, where truth is established through consensual agreement. More importantly, 'the teacher-student' contradiction prevalent in the 'technical' curriculum is resolved. Teachers do not only teach but are also taught through dialogue with their students. Similarly, students not only learn but also teach themselves as they have equal opportunities to be involved in making meanings. The following table shows the different forms of knowledge and the views that each sustains.

Table 2 Three Forms of Knowledge and Their Views of Education

Curriculum as	**'Technical'**	**'Practical'**	**'Critical'**
Aims of education	To produce individuals who are rational and skilful to fulfil established roles in society.	An understanding to develop individuals who are able to make meanings and practical judgments according to the 'good' rather than the 'correct.'	To develop individuals to become critical and active meaning-makers, able to transform society, and establish social justice.
Education	Instrument of social reproduction.	Instrument of social reconstruction.	Instrument of social transformation.
Schooling	A site for transmitting an established body of knowledge.	A site for making meanings and practical judgments.	A site for the discourse of cultural politics.
Knowledge	Objective and corresponding to facts, guided by 'technical' interests. For example,	Subjective and interpretive according to individuals' experiences, guided by 'practical' interests.	Knowledge is consensual and based on reflection and self-interpretations; guided by 'emancipatory' or

cont.

Table 2 *continued*

Curriculum as	'Technical'	'Practical'	'Critical'
	Freire's concept of 'banking education' indicates how knowledge is regarded as a commodity.		Freire's 'critical' interests in his 'conscientization.'
Curriculum	Structured syllabus, subject specialisation, instructional application of theory. Transmission of knowledge and skills.	'Practical' activity of the process of interaction between teachers and students.	*Praxis*; all human activity is understood as emerging from ongoing interaction of reflection, dialogue, and action through critical pedagogy (Darder *et al*., 2003, p.15).
Theory and Practice Relationship	Linear between theory and practice where theory influences practice.	Interdependent; theory influences practice and practice influences theory where both are guided in shared understanding.	Dialectical relationship: theory transforms practice and practice transforms theory.
Pedagogy	Instructional and directive pedagogy: Teachers transmit knowledge and students are mere recipients.	Deliberation and negotiation of the meaning of text between teachers and students. Students become active constructor of meaning and knowledge.	Through dialogue or discourse students become teachers and teachers become students as they reflect and participate in critical pedagogy.
Role of Teacher	Authoritative and mere implementer.	Facilitating students to make their own meanings and construct their own learning experiences. Developer and initiator of curriculum change.	Project organiser, moderator or coordinator with an emancipatory aim. Participatory decision maker with students, administrator, and even community.

cont.

Table 2 *continued*

Curriculum as	'Technical'	'Practical'	'Critical'
Teacher-Student Relationship	Teacher is in authority, directive, and controls students' progress.	Teacher is a participant just like students in meaning making and encourages morally informed actions.	Dialogical relationship which dissolves the contradiction of teacher-student; teacher teaches yet becomes a student him/herself when s/he is taught by his/her students.
Evaluation	To assess how close the product matches the 'idea' or techne in the form of 'tests' of acquisition of what is known and skills mastered.	To judge whether the learning processes and practices are able to further the 'good' of all participants.	Evaluation itself becomes part of the rigorous meaning-making activity where guided by the 'emancipatory' interest, participants themselves evaluate the extent of enlightenment and emancipation that they experienced in the learning process.

(*Source*: Derived from Kemmis *et al.*, 1983; Freire 1978; Grundy, 1987; and Darder *et al.*, 2003)

The following section analyses Islamic education and identifies the type of curriculum that frames its view of education.

Islamic Education in the Malaysian Curriculum

Islamic Education and the 'Technical' Curriculum

Islamic education in the Malaysian curriculum can be understood in two ways. The first is when Islamic education means 'taught subjects' in the national schools and the second is when Islamic education means the 'curriculum' of the Islamic religious schools. It can be argued that Islamic education in the Malaysian curriculum, whether treated as a subject or as curriculum, is still based on a 'technical' view of education. When Islamic education is taught as a subject in the national school curriculum, Islamic education then merely becomes content that needs to be transmitted to the Muslim students. Meanwhile, when Islamic education refers to the curriculum of Islamic religious schools, the term 'curriculum' in this context connotes curriculum as 'product.' Although the curriculum of Islamic education is religious, it is situated in the Malaysian education system, which

inevitably directs it towards becoming a 'technical' curriculum. Moreover, Muslim scholars who were responsible for developing the curriculum of Islamic religious schools, have moved from being 'traditional' (in the sense of being outdated, too theoretical, and unable to prepare Muslims for the challenges of a modern and post-modern eras) to becoming 'traditional' in the positivistic sense (Husain and Ashraf, 1979; Al Faruqi, 1982; Hashim, 1996: 1999; Kazmi, 2003; Sardar, 2003). This change has led to the development of a 'technical' Islamic curriculum (Hashim, 1999). Muslim scholars aspired to rejuvenate Islamic education by subscribing to the methodology of Western modernity and scientific rationality. However, this attempt ignored the philosophical assumptions underlying the effect of scientific rationality on society, hence objectifying and technologising Islamic education with the aim of making it more practical in the modern world yet retaining the characteristics of 'revealed' knowledge that is 'objective', 'certain' and 'indubitable.'

The problem with an objective and 'technical' Islamic curriculum lies in the contradiction that is inherent in the Islamic curriculum regarding the 'means' and the 'end' of Islamic education. The 'end' for which Islamic education is undertaken can neither be specified in advance as an outcome, nor can it be specified by instrumental means. The reason is the 'end' can only be realised through the 'means.' The point is to teach the process and not the product because if the end of Islamic education is to develop 'good' Muslims who will establish social justice, adopting a 'technical' view of the Islamic curriculum implies that the 'end' product would be Muslims who focus on the economic, political, and social demands of a modern and technological world. This is because the aim of a 'technical' curriculum is defined and dictated by economic and political forces. When this is the case, it is not a surprise that the initial aim of Islamic education to develop 'good' Muslims is easily undermined. An Islamic curriculum that is 'technical' can only produce a 'product' that is measurable, but 'good' Muslims can never be measured because the Islamic education understanding of 'good' involves action and judgments that are made based on this faith. So how are Muslims' actions and judgments empirically measured to ensure that they are made based on their faith? The inability of the 'technical' Islamic curriculum in fulfilling the aim of Islamic education shows the weakness of this kind of curriculum.

What is more alarming about this weakness is that it has the ability to mask its weakness by distorting reality. The 'technical' curriculum advances objective and scientific knowledge as the only knowledge that is considered as rational and thus worth learning. Its denial of other forms of reasoning and knowledge signifies its hegemonic tendency, which promotes its ideology through the nexus of the power-knowledge relationship. This ideological domination distorts reality by presenting the social world like the natural world as 'given' rather than socially, politically, and culturally constructed. It is this dominant ideology that perpetuates the advancement and pervasion of science and technology and projects a distorted

reality of the social world of human beings, which undermines the purpose of Islamic education in upholding morality and spirituality.

Islamic Education as 'Personalised' Knowledge

The preceding discussion on Islamic education and its curriculum based on the 'technical' view of education explains the failure of Islamic education in fulfilling its noble aim. At this juncture it is important that an alternative view of Islamic education and its curriculum is suggested. Another understanding of the kinds of knowledge that could be used to explain what Islamic education is all about and how its aim could be achieved is presented in Kazmi's division of two kinds of knowledge: 'theoretical' and 'personalised' knowledge. It can be argued that Kazmi's idea of 'personalised' knowledge is constitutive of the 'practical' and 'critical' knowledge propounded by Habermas. But what exactly is this 'personalised' knowledge and why is it considered important in the advancement of Islamic knowledge and education?

Kazmi (1999) categorised knowledge into two: theoretical and 'personalised'. Theoretical knowledge is associated with the 'abstract, formal, universal, and deals with experiences that are repeatable' (Kazmi, 1999, p. 213). Theoretical knowledge may be distinct from 'personalised' knowledge but they actually complement each other. 'Personalised' knowledge deals with 'non-repeatable and specific experiences that are peculiar to a human being or humans in a given situation' (ibid). Theoretical and 'personalised' knowledge are dependent on each other and one is meaningless without the other. For instance, one can read about the game of chess in a book but to really understand the game of chess, one needs to at least watch how it is being played, if not play it him/herself. Understanding the game of chess involves making judgments about the game and it is the example of game that shows how 'understanding is a function of making judgments' (Kazmi, 1999, p. 216). The personal encounter with the game of chess enables one to have 'personalised' knowledge of the game of chess. So 'personalised' knowledge is learnt not from the transmission of facts or information from one to another rather it is learnt by encountering, understanding, and making judgments about a certain thing. For example, parents do not teach their children through theoretical discourse but through their spoken words, actions, way of thinking, and living that leave a profound mark on their children's lives. In this sense 'personalised' knowledge is constitutive of Habermas' 'practical knowledge.'

A child may be taught that it is a virtue to speak the truth but she/he may not be able to grasp an understanding of the value of being honest if she/he does not learn why it is important to speak the truth. The theoretical knowledge that she/he has of honesty becomes meaningful when she/he has a personal encounter with it, through observing people when they speak the truth or lie, listening, understanding, reflecting, and practising it. She/he can be considered as being able to grasp the

meaning of being honest when she/he realises its importance by practising it himself/herself. Kazmi contends that the primary role of a teacher is not so much to create theoretical knowledge, but rather to 'personalise' knowledge. Before a teacher creates 'personalised' knowledge, she/he needs to have the ability to interpret, understand, and judge his or her own experiences so that she/he would know what is she/he is trying to personalise is true. 'For a teacher the only way to understand knowledge is to live it and experience the difference that knowledge makes to his/her life as a Muslim' (Kazmi, 1999, p. 218). What a teacher teaches is not an impersonal theoretical body of knowledge that she/he has accepted as truth by verifying it against some objective principles but rather 'teaches knowledge that she/he has lived and having lived found it to be true or false' (ibid). It is in the life of a teacher that the distinction between theory and practice, and knowing and acting disappears. The relationship between theory and practice is no longer linear like in technical knowledge but becomes dialectical where theory informs practice and practice informs theory. This is the main point of my argument where Kazmi's idea of 'personalised' knowledge coincides with Habermas' 'practical' and 'critical' knowledge.

The teacher's act of knowing and acting corresponds to Habermas' 'practical' knowledge but it is the teacher's continuous effort of personalisation of knowledge that points to Habermas' 'critical' knowledge. Kazmi explained that 'a body of knowledge does not only allow one 'personalised' knowledge' (1999, p. 219). Personalisation of knowledge is based on the interpretation of experiences where different kinds of experiences determine the form of 'personalised' knowledge. A truth can be 'personalised' in a variety of ways where each personalisation is valid as long as it does not violate the truth. This entails that there is a need for continuous personalisation of knowledge as it may differ in terms of time and places, which prevents its truth from becoming jaded. It is this understanding of 'personalised' knowledge that points to the conditions of a teacher: to be critical, and pursue critical knowledge. In order for Muslims to understand what Islamic education is, and how to be a good Muslim, a teacher needs to be able to demonstrate the ability to understand, think critically, reflect, and make good judgments (phronesis). It is through such pedagogy, based on the 'practical' and 'critical' curriculum (see Table 2), that would enable Muslim learners to learn and understand Islamic education and consequently practise Islam as a way of life. This is because, if Islamic education is serious in realising its aims, then 'practical' and 'critical knowledge,' which are inherent in 'personalised' knowledge, could offer an alternative view of education that may assist in realising the aims, ideals, and values of Islamic education.

Islamic education should not be taught as a subject or based on a 'technical' curriculum, but rather as a way of living through a 'practical' and 'critical' curriculum. The current trend of teaching Islamic education and the nature of its curriculum in the Islamic education system cannot accommodate the teaching of

'personalised' knowledge because of the incommensurability of the 'technical' Islamic curriculum and the curriculum of 'personalised' knowledge. This has eventually led to the inability of the current view of curriculum and pedagogy in Islamic education in Malaysia to achieve the aim, ideals, and values of Islamic education. It is on the basis of this argument that the discussion on what type of a teacher that is necessary to teach Islamic education in a way that would realise the aims, ideals, and values of Islamic education is introduced at this stage.

Murabbi: An Islamic Critical Pedagogue/Teacher

It is important to understand the concept of *murabbi* at this point since this discussion will also explain the kind of knowledge and pedagogy that can help in achieving the ideals and values of Islamic education. In order for a Muslim to be able to read and understand the Quran and practise its teachings in his/her daily life, it is important that she/he learns to relate the signs in the world (his/her own world experiences) and the signs (verses) in the *Qur'an*. But to learn to read the signs this way is equal to learning to make judgments and making such judgments cannot be learned as a Muslim learns about theoretical knowledge. Learning to make judgments is like learning personalised knowledge by personalising it or doing it himself/herself. It should be noted that Kazmi's concept of personalised knowledge differs from Polanyi's (1962) concept of personal knowledge. Polanyi's concept of personal knowledge is a non-thematic knowledge that one acquires without any conscious effort or even awareness of learning it. One is in fact, socialised into it.

Kazmi (1999) claims that education is about helping students create a configuration or specific structure of meaning that tells them what is important and what is not. The acquisition of a configuration of meaning is the result of a complex process of listening, watching, reflecting, and practice. For instance, a child learns from his/her parents what matters and what does not by watching and listening to his/her parents, and reflecting and practising what she/he learns on a daily basis. 'A *murabbi* does what parents do but more explicitly and on a higher level of sophistication' (Kazmi, 1999, pp. 217-8). A *murabbi* is the one who is able to teach personalised knowledge because a *murabbi* is not a facilitator, and does not merely teach what she/he knows or think others should know, but rather she/he teaches it because she/he has lived the experience and found it to be true or false (Kazmi, 1999). An example of a *murabbi* is seen in the Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him because he has reached that level where he is able to reflect the goodness of his life in his every action, word, and idea. This is because although he was a Prophet he was 'neither an ascetic recluse nor an intellectual tower'; although he was an illiterate he was a thinker, and; although 'he was a thinker he was not a cerebral cogitator like our present intellectuals are' (Kazmi, 2002, p. 196). In this sense, Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him was a fully 'embodied thinker because his

activity and experience of thinking is neither purely mental nor purely physical, but it was an activity in which their whole being participated' (Kazmi, 2002, p. 196).

Every act that a Muslim does should be done with his/her whole being. For instance, the obligatory prayers that Muslims have to perform five times a day are not done by 'his/her body and soul and heart and mind, but as an embodied person, surrendering in the single act of prostration his/her whole being to God' (Kazmi, 2002, p. 197). It is important to understand that the term 'thinking' to which is being in 'embodied thinking' is not the common thinking that is usually understood as a cognitive activity, but rather 'it refers to reflection as a mode of being in which human faculties do not function separately but in unison, in harmony with each other' (ibid, p. 213). Yet it is also important to know that the prophetic thinking is the highest level of embodied thinking, but this does not mean that embodied thinking is impossible to achieve. This is because, history has revealed that this is possible when Prophet Muhammad's peace be upon him Companions were also regarded as good models of embodied thinkers to be followed after the demise of the Prophet peace be upon him for their sound and good judgment. Thus, the emphasis that a *murabbi* needs to make in his/her everyday teaching is not just to impart the knowledge of Islam, but more importantly to show how to become a good Muslim.

CONCLUSION

This chapter explores the question of the Islamic education curriculum and its view of education and how to a certain extent has failed to realise the true purpose of Islamic education. The main problem with the contemporary Islamic education system is that it is based on the 'technical' curriculum and view of education. This particular 'means-end' view of education only promotes knowledge as a 'product,' rather than 'personalised' knowledge, which is how knowledge should be viewed in Islamic education. This particular view of curriculum and education does not provide the conditions for the development of the kind of teachers essential in helping to achieve the ideals and values of Islamic education. *Murabbis* are the only teachers that can teach 'personalised' knowledge, hence there is a need for an alternative view of curriculum and education that would develop, support, and provide the space for *murabbis*.

It is also argued that this could be achieved in a critical view of curriculum and pedagogy. If Islamic education is based on a critical view of curriculum and education where the kind of knowledge that is taught takes the form of 'personalised' knowledge and the teachers emulate the pedagogy of *murabbis*, then it is possible to achieve the purpose of Islamic education.

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